

**Town Manager's Office  
Town of Mansfield**

# Memo

To: Town Council  
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager  
CC: Town Employees  
Date: November 14, 2016  
Re: Town Manager's Report

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Below please find my report concerning various items of interest to the Town Council, the staff, and the community:

## **Council Business**

- *Bond Referendum on Mansfield Middle School Gymnasium Project* – As detailed in the Town Clerk's communication to the Town Council (see item #15), our voters approved the issuance of bonds for the MMS gymnasium project by a vote of 7,041 in favor and 2,887 opposed. The number of affirmative votes reached the Charter requirement that at least 15% of the number of electors on the last registry list vote in favor of the question. Superintendent Lyman and I have formed a staff committee to oversee the project; the committee is now in the architect selection process phase.
- *Finance Committee Meeting* – Due to the unavailability of its members, the Finance Committee cancelled its meeting for this evening. Staff will reschedule the meeting shortly.
- *Resignation of Mansfield Board of Education Chair* – I would draw your attention to the letter from Mr. Randy Walikonis, chair of the Mansfield Board of Education, announcing his resignation for December 1, 2016. From my perspective, our community owes Mr. Walikonis a tremendous debt of gratitude. He assumed the leadership of the Board at critical time and had to deal with one of the most challenging situations that a board chair, especially a new chair, needs to face. Working with the rest of the board and key staff, Mr. Walikonis handled this difficult situation in a calm and reasoned way, and the Mansfield Public Schools are now in a good place. Thank you, Randy, for your efforts. You're the type of citizen volunteer that makes our community a great place, and I hope you get a little more time with your family and for other endeavors.
- *Status of UCONN Water System, and Community and Private Wells* – In response to Councilor Sargent's inquiry regarding the status of the UCONN water system, I reached out to the UCONN administration who confirmed that the UCONN system is sound. I also contacted our Director of Public Health, Robert Miller, to ask about the status of community and private wells. Mr. Miller reports that Cedar Ridge and Willington Oaks (both in Willington) are currently in compliance, although Willington Oaks still has water quantity challenges, in part due to drought conditions. The Health District is not aware of any current compliance problems with either water quality or water quantity in Mansfield's off-campus housing complexes. The Health District has seen an increase in applications for well drilling permits, which may indicate that low ground water conditions are having a water quantity impact on some private wells (likely, mostly dug wells).
- *Upcoming Agenda Items* – I have listed two items tentatively scheduled for the November 28, 2016 meeting: 1) the UConn Sewer Agreement; and 2) political activity at transfer station. The Town Attorney will be present to assist with the discussion of both items.

## **Departmental Reports**

- *Fire Department*
  - The Mansfield Fire Department was recently awarded \$2,250 to purchase a camera and auxiliary lighting for fire investigation scenes from FM Global. Mansfield's grant application stood out among the hundreds they received. The equipment will be used to process fire scenes during investigations and to assist with fire prevention programs in the community. During the past 40 years, FM Global - one of the world's largest commercial property

insurers - has awarded millions of dollars in funding to fire departments and related agencies worldwide.

- *Planning & Development*
  - Three public information meetings re the Eastern Gateways Project have been scheduled for early December to share what has been learned about existing conditions in the Route 44 and Route 195 corridors and to solicit feedback from the public on how to improve mobility in the region. The project team will hold a public information session on December 8, 2016 in the Council Chamber. The Open House will start at 6:30 PM and a formal presentation will begin at 7:00 PM. If you cannot attend that meeting, the project committee will hold public information sessions in Coventry on December 1<sup>st</sup> and in Tolland on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Those sessions will start 30 minutes later than the one in Mansfield. More information is available at <http://www.cteasterngateways.com/>.
- *Public Works*
  - I'm happy to report that Ravine Road is now open to thru traffic. The Department of Public Works has repaired and made safety improvements to the road. Drivers should be aware of narrow sections of the road with alternating one-way traffic. Please be aware that access may be limited if farming operations require the road to be closed for a period of time.
- *Town Manager's Office*
  - On November 1, 2016, Maria Capriola guest-lectured for the UCONN MPA Program. She spoke to students about open meeting laws, and their relevance to municipal work.
  - On November 22, 2016 Curt Vincente and Maria Capriola will present to the members of the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association at their 56th annual conference. Curt and Maria will be presenting the following session, "Acquiring the Best People for Your Team: the Employee Recruitment Process."

### **Upcoming Events**

- *Storrs Farmers Market* – Storrs Farmers Market begins new hours on October 15, 2016. The Market is held on the front lawn of the Beck Municipal Building (Town Hall) and will be open every Saturday from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM through Thanksgiving. Everything sold at Storrs Farmers Market is grown and produced right here in eastern Connecticut. In fact, the average distance from farm to market is under 10 miles! Save the date: Storrs Winter Farmers Market at the Mansfield Public Library starts Saturday, Dec. 10. More info: [storrsfarmersmarket.org](http://storrsfarmersmarket.org)
- *Fourth Annual Winter Welcome* – The Mansfield Downtown Partnership invites Mansfield residents and visitors to celebrate the new season at the Fourth Annual Winter Welcome on Saturday, December 3. Winter Welcome will take place on and around Betsy Paterson Square in Storrs Center. Winter Welcome will feature ice sculptures and activities on Paterson Square; a winter-themed puppet show at the Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry; and a visit from Santa Claus at Barnes & Noble UConn. On Paterson Square local vendors including Keifer's Kettle Corn, Running Rabbit Press, and The Tiny Acre Farm will have food and gift items available. There will be open houses, specials, and treats at participating downtown businesses, including Amazon@Storrs, Barnes & Noble UConn, Cut to the Chase, Dog Lane Café, Educational Playcare, The Flower Pot, Head Husky Barber Styling Shop, Insomnia Cookies, Main Street Homes at Storrs Center, Mansfield Public Library/Library Express, Mathnasium, and Subway. Strolling musicians and carolers, including the UConn Marching Band Tubas and the Mansfield Middle School Chamber Singers, will delight visitors with pop-up performances throughout the downtown. At 4:30 PM, the E. O. Smith High School Chamber Choir will lead a Community Sing-Along on Paterson Square to cap off the festivities. Winter Welcome is free and open to the public. This event will take place rain or shine. Parking is available in the Storrs Center Garage, which is free for the first two hours and \$1 per hour thereafter, with a daily maximum charge of \$8. For more information, please visit [mansfieldct.gov/winterwelcome](http://mansfieldct.gov/winterwelcome).

### **Upcoming Meetings\***

- Committee on Committees, November 15, 2016, 6:30 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Open Space Preservation Committee, November 15, 2016, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Economic Development Commission, November 16, 2016, 5:30 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Planning and Zoning Commission , November 16, 2016, 6:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Conservation Commission, November 16, 2016, 7:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Economic Development Commission, November 17, 2016, 5:30 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Parks Advisory Committee, November 17, 2016, 6:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Regulatory Review Committee, November 18, 2016, 8:30 AM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Personnel Committee, November 21, 2016, 5:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Traffic Authority, November 22, 2016, 9:00 AM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Climate Action Task Force, November 22, 2016, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council Meeting, November 28, 2016, 7:00 PM, Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

*\*Meeting dates/times are subject to change. Please view the [Town Calendar](#) or contact the Town Clerk's Office at 860-429-3302 for a complete and up-to-date listing of committee meetings.*